

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-7 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 3 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Prophet (U.S. Patent No. 5,413,743).

Claims 1, 3 and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Walsh (U.S. Patent No. 4,654,761).

Finally, claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Prophet or Walsh.

In the above rejections, the Examiner maintains that the wavy surfaces of Prophet and Walsh can constitute the protruding portion as claimed (*see* the Response to Arguments section on pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action). However, Applicants respectfully disagree and traverse these rejections below.

The Examiner asserts that Prophet and Walsh each teach a protruding portion and an offset as claimed. However, the Examiner ignores the particular context and combinations in which these features are recited in the claims. For example, claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, “a boundary surface between the laminated first and second resin layers at said protruding portion is offset toward the first resin layer side relative to the back side of the second resin layer adjacent said protruding portion.” As seen from this portion of claim 1, it is a boundary surface between the laminated first and second resin layers at said protruding portion which is offset. For example, as shown in the non-limiting embodiment of Fig. 3, the boundary surface 25 between

laminated first and second resin layers 26, 24 at a protruding portion 24b is offset δ from a surface of the resin layer 24 adjacent to the protruding portion 24b. Even if, for the sake of argument alone, the Prophet or Walsh wavy surfaces could be considered protruding portions, the Examiner has failed to identify a boundary surface between laminated resin layers at the alleged protruding portions. Indeed, the Examiner's alleged protruding portions (the wavy surfaces) are separated from the first resin layer by a space. Accordingly, there can be no boundary surface between laminated layers at these alleged protruding portions as claimed.

Also, the Examiner states that Prophet and Walsh each include an offset because of an open space between the resin layers (*see* Response to Arguments section on pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action). However, any offset due to the open space between the resin layers in Prophet or Walsh is irrelevant to the claimed offset. The claimed offset is of the boundary surface, as explained above and illustrated in the non-limiting embodiment of Fig. 3. This boundary surface between the resin layers is offset toward the first resin layer side relative to the back side of the second resin layer adjacent said protruding portion. The space in Prophet and Walsh between the alleged resin layers has nothing to do with the claimed offset of a boundary surface.

In view of the above, claim 1 is submitted to be allowable over Prophet and Walsh, and claims 3, 5 and 7 are believed to be allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

With respect to claim 4, even if Prophet or Walsh were modified as suggested by the Examiner, the modification would not correct the above-noted deficiencies of those references with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, claim 4 is submitted to be allowable at least because of its dependency. Furthermore, even if the Examiner's alleged offset was relevant, the Examiner

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.116
EXPEDITED PROCEDURE
U.S. APPLN. NO. 10/825,682

DOCKET NO. Q81126

provides no motivation for providing any particular offset value, let alone the particular offset value range recited in claim 4.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.


Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER


Stephen R. Valancius
Registration No. 57,574

Date: October 3, 2006